UNITED NATIONS

EP

Governing Council of the United Nations

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.18/5
23 February 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Eighteenth session
Nairobi, 15-26 May 1995
Item 4 (b) the provisional agenda*

POLICY ISSUES: EMERGING POLICY ISSUES

Cleaner Production, environmental technology assessment, Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level, development of international guidelines on information on potential environmental impacts that exporters of a technology could feasibly provide to importers

Report by the Executive Director

Summary

To respond to Governing Council decision 17/17 on transfer of environmentally sound technology and to decision 17/18, operative paragraph 4, on technology transfer to minimize the generation of hazardous waste, UNEP has further developed the Cleaner Production Programme, including Environmental Technology Assessment (EnTA) activities. The Awareness and Prevention for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL) Programme is also related to those decisions. Developments in Cleaner Production, EnTA and APELL over the last two years were reviewed at three senior-level advisory group meetings/seminars, held in October and December 1994. The present report highlights the achievements of each of the programmes. In its decision 17/17, the Governing Council also requested the Executive Director to investigate the feasibility of developing international guidelines for the information on potential environmental impacts that exporters of a technology should provide to importers. The conclusions are detailed in section III.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council might wish to consider adopting a decision along the following lines:

The Governing Council

(a) Notes with satisfaction:

. The progress made worldwide in promoting cleaner and safer industrial production, including processes and products, through the Awareness and Prevention for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL), Cleaner Production, and Environmental Technology Assessment (EnTA) Programmes,

* UNEP/GC.18/1.

Na.95-0033 160395 160395

/...

as an effective approach for the protection of human life, the environment and property, and for the prevention of industrial pollution and the wasteful use of resources, particularly in developing countries;

. The initiatives of several Governments, United Nations and intergovernmental organizations, industry and business associations, and non-governmental organizations in supporting UNEP programmes in this field;

. The role UNEP has played in disseminating these activities and in supporting national and regional initiatives, particularly in developing countries;

(b) Calls upon Governments to continue to give these programmes a high priority in their development policies and programmes, to support the efforts needed to promote them, as well as to provide and/or channel the technical and financial support conducive to these initiatives, particularly amongst small and medium-scale enterprises;

(c) Calls upon United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations and donor countries to continue to support these initiatives at the national and regional levels;

(d) Calls upon national, regional and international funding agencies and banks to recognize the financial benefits of these programmes and to take the necessary steps to include them in their financing programmes;

(e) Calls upon the Executive Director of UNEP to:

. Continue to support Governments and industry in developing Cleaner Production demonstration projects, particularly in developing countries and small and medium-scale enterprises, and to continue to support and monitor the activities of the National Cleaner Production Centres;

. Continue to develop UNEP information services on cleaner and safer industrial production, using a variety of delivery systems;

. Continue to develop appropriate tools for the initiation and implementation of UNEP's programmes in the field of cleaner and safer industrial production;

. Proceed to develop international guidelines on information on potential environmental impacts that technology exporters or suppliers should provide to technology importers or users;

. Report to the Governing Council in its next regular session on progress made.

I. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CLEANER PRODUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT PROGRAMMES

1. A total of 160 participants from 40 countries attended the third High-Level Advisory Seminar, hosted by Poland in November 1994, and reviewed the progress in the Cleaner Production Programme and proposed recommendations on its future development.

Main findings

* UNEP, as per Agenda 21, has provided leadership in promoting Cleaner Production, a preventative approach, leading to more efficient use of raw materials and pollution prevention;

* Awareness of Cleaner Production continues to grow amongst Governments and industry in most countries. However, there are tremendous opportunities for further progress, in particular in small and medium-sized enterprises. In developing countries and countries with economies in transition, a 30 to 80 per cent reduction in emissions and in use of raw materials is possible, with low-cost, quick payback Cleaner Production alternatives. However, access to funding for Cleaner Production investments is often difficult;

* There is a better understanding of the various economic, technological, and institutional barriers to Cleaner Production. However, the corresponding solutions to overcome such barriers are not yet in place;

* More and more international organizations are involved in the Cleaner Production network.

Recommendations from the High-Level Seminar

* Governments need to give Cleaner Production high priority in policy and programme development, particularly in adjusting macro-economic policies, providing technical and financial support to encourage the widespread adoption of Cleaner Production, particularly among small and medium-scale enterprises;

* Cleaner production activities need to go beyond large-scale transnational enterprises and be fully integrated into all enterprise activities and operations, at all levels, and across all industry sectors. More industry research needs to be directed towards Cleaner Production techniques;

* Well-designed education and training is needed at different levels to move Cleaner Production beyond awareness-raising to actual behaviour modification and the widespread dissemination of the use of Cleaner Production tools;

* Transfer of good quality, industry sector-specific, easy-to-access information in a variety of ways is a basic requirement for the promotion of Cleaner Production;

* Funding is required not only for capital investment, but also for awareness-raising, information dissemination, capacity-building and demonstration projects;

* UNEP needs to continue to strengthen its Cleaner Production Programme, bearing in mind the above recommendations, particularly in information exchange; development of policy and implementation tools; education and training; strengthening and increasing the scope and depth of the working groups; and supporting effective National Cleaner Production Centres and similar institutions.

II. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS FOR EMERGENCIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL (APELL) PROGRAMME OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS

The third biennial senior-level expert meeting was held in Paris in December 1994 to review the progress of APELL and to propose recommendations for its future orientation. Over 80 participants from 35 countries took part.

Implementation of APELL

* New initiatives were started in different parts of the world, in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, Peru), Asia (China, India, Indonesia, Thailand), Eastern Europe (Baltic States, Russian Federation) and Africa (Senegal).

* A notable feature of implementation has been the cooperation among and coordination of inputs from a large number of United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental organizations and other intergovernmental organizations, Governments, NGOs, industrial associations and business associations.

Expansion of the scope of APELL operations

* Work has started to extend the APELL process to transport systems (with help from Sweden) and to ports (in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization). Manuals for each application have been drafted and are currently under review in preparation for pilot project implementation.

Recommendations for future orientations

* Continue to investigate effective methods of communication with the local community;

* Continue information exchange on safer management practices and techniques;

* Continue closer integration of APELL activities with those of UNEP, and other United Nations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the fields of technology, health and safety;

* Develop more tools for APELL implementation and for training in APELL operations;

* Start more demonstration projects;

* Seek new sources of funding and in-kind contributions to meet increasing demand for APELL.

III. INFORMATION ON POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS THAT EXPORTERS OF A TECHNOLOGY COULD FEASIBLY PROVIDE TO IMPORTERS

Concerning environmental releases and potentially adverse effects

* A description and quantification of the releases, including emissions and discharges to air, surface water and groundwater, soil, and solid waste and hazardous waste streams;

* A description of the potentially adverse effects of these releases on human health and safety and ecological systems;

* The demand of the technology for raw materials (including toxic or hazardous materials), water and energy and the potential environmental implications of providing them;

* The potential environmental impacts of products produced by the technology, including impacts of product use, discard and disposal.

Concerning environmental monitoring and management programmes

* A description of the environmental monitoring programme for the technology, including emissions and ambient monitoring to be carried out, along with a description of the sampling and analysis methods to be used;

* A description of the environmental management programme for the technology, including the actions that should be taken to minimize environmental releases and their potentially adverse effects;

* A description of actions that should be taken in response to both routine and accidental releases;

* The expertise and skills of management and personnel necessary to operate, maintain, monitor and manage the technology in an environmentally sound manner;

* The maintenance and repair programme necessary for successful operation of the technology from an environmental point of view.

Concerning environmental performance of the technology in the exporters' home country and other locations

* Identification of the locations where the technology has been operated in the past;

* Description of the environmental standards applicable to the technology at those locations;

* Copies of the environmental permits or licenses issued to the technology;

* Identification of the environmental regulatory agencies responsible for issuing permits or monitoring environmental compliance of the technology at those locations;

* The environmental compliance record of the technology at those locations, including identification of violations of environmental standards, environmental damages and adverse health effects and accidental releases that have occurred;

* The environmental policy of the technology supplier with respect to exports; specifically, whether the expected technology is designed and intended for operation in accordance with the environmental standards in the suppliers' home country, or the most protective standards in other locations where the technology has operated.